



Volunteer Program Handbook

**Resources to build, strengthen,
and maintain meaningful partnerships**

A Message from the Superintendent Of Carroll County Public Schools

On behalf of the students and staff of Carroll County Public Schools, I want to thank you for your interest in volunteering in our schools. I know your time is valuable, and your willingness to contribute some of that valuable time to our school system shows your commitment to the education and well-being of our students.

Volunteers are a vital part of our school system. We cannot do it alone. We greatly depend on the time, talents, and energy you are willing to share to help us meet the needs of our students.

When you volunteer for Carroll County Public Schools, you become an important part of a team that works to ensure the highest standards of academic, social, and emotional growth for our students. As a volunteer, you will assist teachers and students in their day-to-day activities and provide a valuable support for our school system.

Volunteers touch many lives and have a tremendous impact on the success of both our students and staff. Please know that every employee in our school system appreciates your contributions as a school volunteer. When schools, families, and our community work together, everyone benefits.

Sincerely,

Cynthia McCabe, Ed.D

Superintendent of Schools

Volunteer Program Standards & Definitions

The school system welcomes volunteers and encourages them to support student achievement through their service. During the school year, registered volunteers donate thousands of service hours to support educational endeavors. The valuable contributions of volunteers are recognized and appreciated by students and staff.

The partnership between the school system and those who volunteer, promote standards of mutual respect and trust, individual talents and skills utilization, diversity acceptance, and cooperative and friendly relationships.

Volunteering is an acceptable reason to visit a school. It is important that such visits not interrupt instruction, distract students or staff, or interfere with a student's right to privacy.

A volunteer is a person who offers Carroll County Public Schools his/her services without receipt of monetary compensation or student-learning hours (except students who serve as mentors, tutors, interns, or volunteers for consecutive school days). In order to volunteer in a high school, you must be at least twenty-one years old.

Volunteers include, but are not limited to: classroom helpers, chaperones, tutors, mentors, club leaders, guest speakers, readers, PTA/PTO volunteers, Booster Club volunteers, event ticket collectors, concession operators and presenters.

Student Volunteers are students enrolled in Carroll County Public Schools, another public school system, a private school or non-public school, or students who are home-schooled. Student volunteers serve as mentors, tutors, and interns. Student volunteers must also complete the volunteer training/ application and check the student volunteer box on the application.

Supervision of volunteers can occur in three different situations depending on the activity:

- Direct Supervision occurs when a CCPS staff member is overseeing or directing the activities of a volunteer at all times and is physically in the same area.
- Limited Supervision occurs when a CCPS staff member is overseeing or directing the activities of a volunteer but is not always physically in the same area.
- Unsupervised volunteering occurs when a staff member may not be in the immediate area.

Student Contact occurs when an activity brings a volunteer and the student together with or without physical contact.

Becoming a Volunteer

Annual Application

Approval status expires on the last day of each school year. Volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Application Form each school year. New forms will be available online on or about August 1st.

Volunteer Screening

The screening of all volunteers is important to ensure the safety of students, staff, and other volunteers. Requests to volunteer are delayed until the screening process is completed. Once the screening process is completed, volunteers will receive an email at the email address provided to confirm their volunteer status. This may take up to 5 days. This is a system generated email. Please check your junk and spam folders.

All potential volunteers are expected to provide a true and accurate response to the Criminal History Statement on the Volunteer Application Form. Information collected on this form will be kept confidential. A record of conviction does not automatically exclude an individual from being considered for volunteer service. However, individuals who have not satisfied the specifics outlined by the court system (e.g. probation) may experience a delay in their ability to volunteer.

Volunteers may be subject to a background check based on the responses provided on the Volunteer Information Form. Carroll County Public Schools reserves the right to reject any individual who willfully misrepresents information on his/her Volunteer Information Form. You may be contacted if additional information is deemed necessary.

Volunteering

Once approved, volunteers may begin their service with the students and staff of Carroll County Public Schools at the discretion of the school. Volunteers should reach out to schools to determine needs and a schedule. Volunteer registration information will be added to our Volunteer Database in preparation for when volunteer service begins.

When arriving to the school, all volunteers will need to check in with the office and present a valid government issued photo identification. School personnel will provide the volunteer with a badge that must be displayed on the person for the duration of the volunteer service, and returned upon completion.

Volunteers will then need to log in to the Volunteer Tracking System to assure that service is properly tracked. Upon completion of the volunteer service, volunteers will need to log out of the Volunteer Tracking System and return the badge to school personnel.

Orderly Learning Environment

In an effort to support a school environment that is conducive to learning, volunteers shall refrain from bringing a child or children with them to the location where the adult is volunteering. This may include siblings or family members of an enrolled child or an enrolled child who is not in attendance on a given day.

Additionally, volunteers should refrain from interrupting the learning environment. Volunteers are asked to stay within their assigned volunteer area.

Reasonable Attire

All volunteers, working in schools and/or with students who attend Carroll County Public Schools, are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate for the setting.

Acceptable Volunteer Behavior

Volunteers are role models for students and should adhere to both school system and school-based policies and procedures. If a concern does arise, the volunteer should make an appointment with the building level administrator to discuss his/her concerns.

Acceptable volunteer behaviors include:

- Abiding by CCPS and school policies/directions from school personnel.
- Addressing concerns in an appropriate manner with building level administrators.
- Supporting an orderly learning environment.
- Using appropriate language with staff, students, other volunteers and visitors.
- Engaging appropriately with staff, students, other volunteers and visitors.
- Demonstrating the ability to fulfill assigned volunteer responsibilities.

Carroll County Public Schools will not tolerate unreasonable or unacceptable behavior, bullying, harassment, intimidation, discrimination, or hazing by volunteers toward students, employees, bus drivers, bus assistants, other volunteers, and/or visitors.

Volunteers who demonstrate these unacceptable behaviors will find that their actions result in a change or loss of their volunteer status. If you witness an incident, report it to administration.

Serious Threats and Violent Acts

A serious threat of violence is a verbal or nonverbal declaration of intent to inflict significant injury to persons or damage to property with the perceived intent to carry through on the threat. Serious threats of violence against any individual in the Carroll County Public

Schools community will not be tolerated. Violent acts committed against another individual on Carroll County Board of Education owned or leased property, on a school or coach bus, or at any school system sponsored related trip or activity will be handled as illegal actions. Serious threats and violent acts will result in a change or loss of volunteer status.

Weapons and Firearms

Ensuring a safe school environment for students, staff, volunteers, and visitors is a responsibility of all involved. Any volunteer with knowledge of the presence of a weapon on school property or at school-related events should report the incident to school-based administrative staff immediately. Maryland Law prohibits possession of a firearm, knife, or deadly weapon on school property by individuals other than law enforcement officers. Please remember parking lots are also part of school property and covered under the provisions of this law.

Student Confidentiality

Volunteers are expected to:

- Maintain the Confidentiality of Student Information Student information is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well as through state regulations. Confidentiality refers to the obligation not to disclose or share student information with unauthorized parties. Student records are identified as confidential, and must be treated in accordance with federal law and state regulations. All CCPS employees and volunteers are held accountable to maintain this level of student privacy.
- CCPS personnel may share confidential student information with volunteers on a need-to-know basis. Volunteers are required by law to protect the confidentiality of all student information. At no time is it appropriate to share student information through casual conversations, social media platforms, etc.

Volunteers should:

- Only discuss confidential student information with CCPS personnel.
- Not be allowed access to student records.
- Not be asked by staff to evaluate student work, record student grades, or analyze individual student data.

Volunteers must refrain from:

- Sharing student information with non-CCPS people.
- Initiating conversation with students outside of the volunteer setting.
- Using a portable electronic device or social media platform to share student information or school-related matters.

If a volunteer feels that a student's right to privacy has been violated, the concern should be brought to the attention of the school-based administrator.

Engage in Appropriate Student Relationships

The relationship between students of any age and an employee in any position with Carroll County Public Schools is to be one of a professional nature at all times. Volunteers are expected to regard relationships with students in the same professional manner as school system employees.

The following behaviors directed toward students enrolled in Carroll County Public Schools will not be tolerated:

- Child abuse, sexual abuse, or mental injury
- Sexual harassment
- Personal or intimate reference to self or others
- Intimate or inappropriate gifts
- Communications of an intimate or non-professional nature
- Meeting a student for non-professional reasons

- Dating and sexual relations
- Condoning or participating with students committing illegal acts or acts in violation of school rules.
- Initiating, encouraging, or engaging in obscene or pornographic discussions or displays with students.
- Participating in the transfer, or attempted transfer of alcohol or drugs with or without the exchange of money or other valuables.

Report Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse and child neglect are illegal. Volunteers are required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect. A report must be made if there is 'reason to believe' that abuse or neglect possibly occurred. Information should be reported without further investigation, interrogation, or other verification of the allegation.

Volunteers who have reason to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred, should request assistance from a school-based administrator or member of the school's Guidance/Counseling staff to complete a required written report. CCPS staff will then assist the volunteer with the steps required to contact the Carroll County Department of Social Services, Protective Services, at 410-386-3434 to complete the oral report.

Maintain a Smoke and Drug-Free Workplace

The use of tobacco products and electronic cigarettes, in any form, is prohibited in or on Carroll County Public Schools' owned or leased facilities and properties at all times.

Volunteers should refrain from bringing or using tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, alcohol, inhalants, or illegal drugs on or within school property, school or coach buses, or at school-related activities and events. If a volunteer must have ready access to his/her prescription or over-the-counter medication, such items should be placed in a secure location to avoid access and exposure to students.

Refrain From the Use of Portable Electronic Devices

Portable electronic devices should only be used in an emergency situation during volunteer service. Volunteers are asked to turn off the audible notification on portable electronic devices when visiting a school, supervising students, participating in an activity with students, or chaperoning a field trip or class activity, unless specifically requested otherwise.

Volunteers should refrain from electronically communicating with students.

Additionally, volunteers should refrain from photographing, videotaping, and audiotaping students or student activities. Volunteers should not post or send student photographs or images through social media, the internet, etc. Not all parents grant CCPS permission to allow their child's voice to be reproduced or to have his/her image appear in such things as a video, a photograph, or social media websites.

Adhere to Standard Health Precautions

The likelihood of exposure to blood borne pathogens in a school is minimal. Blood borne pathogens include the organisms that cause HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C. If assisting a staff or student with an injury, remember to put a protective barrier between yourself and the blood, bodily fluid, or body tissues that may be present from the injury.

Any direct contact with blood, bodily fluids, or body tissues should result in immediately washing the exposed area, and reporting the exposure to the school nurse and school-based administrator. Any injury to a student, staff member, or volunteer should be reported immediately to the school nurse and school-based administrator.

Respect Allergies and Sensitivities

Increases in food allergies and sensitivities can have serious health implications. As a result, food may not be brought to school or school-related events and activities to share. The sharing of food items is prohibited.

Simply restricting consumption may not be enough for some individuals. Any contact with an 'unsafe' food, cross-contamination, and hidden trace ingredients can also pose a serious health implication for some students or staff members. Volunteers should also refrain from purchasing any food and/or beverages for students when chaperoning student activities.

Additionally, please limit the use of perfumes, colognes, and lotions when volunteering. These items can also be known to cause allergic and sensitivity reactions for some individuals.

Field Trips

Field trip chaperones are selected and notified by school personnel. Chaperones must meet the following requirements:

- Be at least 21 years of age
- Have an approved volunteer status
- Comply with all CCPS policies and school procedure
- Demonstrate standards of acceptable behavior prior to and throughout the entire trip or activity

Chaperones are expected to supervise student behavior and activities during the course of the trip/activity. This responsibility includes oversight of the health and safety of the students assigned to your group.

Only students, staff, and volunteers who have been approved to attend the trip and travel with the group to the activity are eligible to participate in the activity. Individuals who might be present at the activity location but were not approved or selected to serve as a chaperone may not 'shadow' the group or participate in the scheduled activities. Students are to stay in their assigned groups unless there is an emergency that requires students to disperse from their assigned groups. Additionally, there must be at least one (1) staff

member on each bus. Chaperones should display proper bus riding procedures and encourage the same behavior from students.

Overnight Trips/Activities

Volunteers with an approved volunteer status, who have been selected as chaperones for overnight trips/activities, are subject to a background check in addition to the annual volunteer training.

Background check applications must be submitted to the County Volunteer Program Coordinator at least 30 days prior to the scheduled trip/activity. Background check reports are only valid for 30 days from the date of the current trip/activity.

CCPS reserves the right to limit, suspend, or revoke volunteer privileges at any time for reasons deemed appropriate by administrators without prior notice.

CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS LEGAL NOTICES IN PUBLICATIONS

Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) is required to include one or more legal notices in publications and handbooks. A Notice of Non-discrimination is required in publications for distribution. In addition, the ADA Accessibility Statement is required in all publications pertaining to events to which the general public, including parents/guardians, is invited.

The following statement should be included in all publications:

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Board of Education of Carroll County does not engage in discrimination that is unlawful or contrary to Maryland State Department of Education guidance on the basis of age, color, genetic information, marital status, mental or physical disability, ancestry or national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The Board of Education of Carroll County is firmly committed to creating equal employment and educational opportunities for all persons by providing an environment that supports optimal academic achievement and productive work and is free from any form of unlawful discrimination, including access to school facilities, educational programs, and extracurricular activities.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Human Resources, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157, (410) 751-3070.

The following statement about program accessibility should be used in advertisements, brochures and flyers publicizing events to which the general public, including parents/guardians, is invited:

ADA ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or the provision of services, programs or activities. Persons needing auxiliary aids and services for communication should contact the Communications Office at 410-751-3020 or publicinfo@carrollk12.org, or write to Carroll County Public Schools, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, may use Relay or 7-1-1. Please contact the school system at least one (1) week in advance of the date the special accommodation is needed.

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